Cam. d. 700. 5

A Description of the Unregenerate and the truly Christian Temper or State;

IN A

SERMON

PREACH'D before the

University of Cambridge,

ON

COMMENCEMENT SUNDAY

In the Forenoon, *June* 30. 1700.

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By *JOHN GASKARTH* D. D.
Sometimes Fellow of *Pembroke*-Hall, now Vicar of *Alhallows Barking, London.*

Τὸ γὰρ ἐπ' ἀνακαινισμῷ καὶ τῇ μεταβολῇ τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν, τὴν σωτήριον παραλαμβάνεσθαι γέννησιν, παντὶ δῆλόν ἐστι. Greg. Nyss. Orat. Catechet. 40.
Ὅρον ἔχομεν τὸν σταυρὸν τοῦ κυρίου---ἀναγεννηθέντες τοίνυν προσηλωθῶμεν ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ ἀνανήψωμέν τε, καὶ ἁγιασθῶμεν. Clem. Alex. Pæd. l. 3. c. 12.
Χωρὶς ἁγιασμοῦ οὐδεὶς ὄψεται τὸν Κύριον. Heb. 12. 14.

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Ephes. II. 1.

And you hath he quickned who were dead in in treſpaſſes, and ſins.

THE Apoſtle applies this as a general Doctrine not only to the Gentiles, but even to the beſt of thoſe Educated under the *Moſaic* Diſcipline, himſelf, and his other Fellow-Apoſtles (ver. 3.) which he likewiſe declares, *Tit.* 3. 3. The word *Quickned* here is not in the original Greek, but the parallel place (*Col.* 2. 13.) plainly proves that our Author had it now in his mind likewiſe, & that 'tis well ſupply'd by our Tranſlators. Indeed we find it expreſſly ſet down nearer hand, even in a continu'd Sentence with the Text, and as it were a Repetition of it, ver. 5. So that we may be ſure of our *Engliſh* rendring of theſe words. And as on the one part they belong to all, whether in a mere State of Nature, or under the Legal Diſpenſation, or thoſe that reſt in a *formal* profeſſion of the Goſpel only, not being enliven'd by the Grace and Spirit that Chriſt purchaſed; or as they denote on the other that ſmaller number of true Chriſtians, who from a ſinful courſe of Life according to the corrupt deſires of Fleſh, are recover'd by *the Spirit of holineſs* (Rom. 1. 4.) the great Life-giving Goſpel-principle into a Vertuous Demeanour, the proper Exerciſes of our reaſonable kind, Juſtice, Godlineſs, Temperance, Humility, in their moſt exalted Chriſtian degree, as the Text has this Latitude, or Comprehenſion in it.

I ſhall firſt explain both theſe Phraſes, *Dead in ſins, and enlivened, or quickned*, which divide the two Worlds of Mankind, the Ungodly, and the Righteous; pretenders only, and true Believers; and then proceed on proper Heads of diſcourſe from them.

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First then, *dead in ſins*, or thro' their effect, cannot here refer to this Animal Life, tho' Death often in this ſenſe, a ſhorter period of this Animal-Life, than our natural Frame would otherwiſe arrive at, is the conſequence of a courſe of Sin; but *dead* in this place muſt have another relation to a higher Life and Nature in us, which Sin deſtroys. And that is indeed a Spiritual Senſation, a juſt Perception, and reliſh of the Soul as to its proper Objects, while it exerciſes its Faculties more ſeparately from Body, that portion of Matter with which it is vitally conjoyn'd, not in purſuance of ſenſual Propenſions, or under the influence of theſe, but retaining its Liberty, or Dominion over them, with the true Apprehenſions at firſt given it, and by this means chuſing, or determining it ſelf to right Moral Inſtances, it becomes more capable of the diſplays of Grace, and is more freely acted by them. This is the true Life of Man; when his Reaſonable part lives in him, he judges, and taſts by his Mind alone and his beſt Faculties, and then enjoys the plentiful effuſions and beams of the Spirit; and ſo in His Light ſees Light, that is, knows things with the fulleſt evidence, even in the demonſtration of this bleſſed Agent, as I may ſo ſpeak. This true Life is deſtroy'd by Sin, or Men are *dead* to it thro' the habits thereof, while the Mind thus deſcends from its pure Acts, and forms its Judgments only with regard to the Ideas of Senſe, and in confuſion with them; and ſo muſt alſo be depriv'd of the freer influences of Divine Grace by that means.

Now *Quickned* is, when from this ſunk, this liveleſs State, by a true Repentance, and thro' the Communications of the holy Spirit, (the privilege of Repentance, and ſtrength to perform it, being both purchaſed for us by the meritorious Sacrifice of Chriſt) *quickned* is, when from this ſunk, this liveleſs State we are thus reſtor'd to an uncaptivated uſe of our Minds, the true Apprehenſions, the right Judgments belonging to them; and have the Rays of Grace more freely acting our Minds or Spirits, to deliver them more from the ſtraitneſs of Senſe, enlarge their Capacities beyond themſelves,

ſelves, and carry them to ſeveral advances of Knowledge in the way of Godlineſs, that could be no proper Acquirements of theirs, or reſult from them however honeſtly prepar'd and exercis'd. Thus we attain the utmoſt advantages of reaſonable Creatures, or become Chriſtians indeed.

Let us now ſee how theſe two Principles, which define the Unregenerate, and the Regenerate State, *Dead in ſin, and dead to ſin*, ſo frequent Phraſes in the New Teſtament, how each of theſe will act, or operate in the ſeveral Obligations Mankind are under, with reſpect to themſelves, the other individuals of Humane Nature their Brethren, and God; as likewiſe take notice of the Fates, and Conſequences that attend theſe both.

And this lower Principle, when it determines, or governs the Man, only prompts to the pleaſures of Senſe, as corrupt Nature has the ſtrongeſt Byaſs, or ſtands moſt inclin'd in ſeveral Perſons. Some it drives on to the groſſeſt Satisfactions, an eager purſuance of the Affections of Fleſh, Luſts properly ſo call'd, *That* moſt *war againſt the Soul*, moſt hinder its native Aſpirings, and Powers, and even degrade it from the eminency of its Nature, its Spiritual Kind, that it can employ none of its *Faculties* on its proper Objects, not even on the eternal Being himſelf, whoſe Image it is, and in Communion with whom its trueſt, its chiefeſt felicity conſiſts; but only uſe them with reſpect to the Body, wherein 'tis ſo immerſed, to invent ſome new ſenſual Entertainments, or more enjoy the experienc'd Inſtances of this Brutiſh ſort, or Apologize for them. And this the Heathen World, who had the Rules of Morality of their own making, not being bleſs'd with Revelation, an inſpir'd Law, true Reaſon declar'd, and enacted by God, affords us a diſmal example of, even in ſome who were of the moſt refin'd Thoughts, the moſt rais'd Philoſophy among them. And 'twould be well, if many enjoying the advantages of the Goſpel, in an utter rejection of theſe advantages, and deſpite of the Spirit of Grace too, that more largely accompanies this Diſpenſation, did not ſtill both purſue and defend, or maintain ſuch wicked Courſes.

And the reaſon of theſe Men is not only thus warp'd to patronize Sin, and imploy it ſelf in *Fruitleſs* ſearches of ſtill ſome new ſenſual Delights, the lawful and allow'd Inſtances whereof, that are without Remorſes alſo, ever affording the greateſt; I ſay the reaſon of theſe Men is not only thus warped, but in a great meaſure defac'd, and loſt, while they ſo far conſent, give themſelves up to Carnal Reliſhes, confus'd Satisfactions ariſing from Body, as both to deſtroy thoſe Reliſhes, or Satisfactions thro' too vehement Indulgence of them, and even diſpatch the Animal too; which one may believe, none would do, not conſidering an after State, deſtroy the thing they would obtain, and themſelves likewiſe, unleſs they were forſaken of Reaſon before.

Others this ſenſual Principle carries to as ſenſual an Effect, ſordid Covetouſneſs of this *Earthly Mammon*, either with regard to Carnal Enjoyments, that thro' the value this has in a Degenerate World, and in its procurement, they may drink more deeply of theſe Enjoyments; or perhaps on the account of ſtill a more ſordid, more unreaſonable love of this Mammon it ſelf, that they may obtain great ſtores thereof, while they are not able to anſwer, or ſatisfie any of the uſes to which it ſerves; or that they may Infidelly rely upon it for all their Supplies, without having recourſe to the inviſible Hand, and Diſtributions of Providence, which requires more thought, more free abſtracted exerciſe of Mind than ſuch Perſons are capable of; which Love and Dependence ſo unduly placed conſtitutes Idolatry in its formal Notion (*Col.* 3. 5.) And when this Covetouſneſs, and, what always attends it, Diſcontentment with his preſent ſhare, influences the Man, how will it hurry him to all the Inſtances of Injuſtice, and Injury with whom his Intercourſe, or Concerns are! For as to his Neighbour, this has no regard to his Advantages, no not even to the neceſſary Demands of his Nature, but ſtill incites to ſome new Acqueſts, to purſue private Intereſts, his Pleaſures or his Profits with the utmoſt Damages that can befall other People. This is the nature of Self-Love that is founded in Senſe, which looks no farther than it feels, whether its Pleaſures, or its Pains; nor can Dictate in any larger compaſs, than to purchaſe the one, and redreſs, or prevent the other. And this

this narrow Self-Love determin'd to Body, was that which the Heathens built their whole Structure both of Politics and Morals upon; their own Advantages in this respect, a better Provision for this Animal Life, and that with regard to particular Persons, was the Ground of all their Rules, and Laws. Justice indeed had a name among them in their several Languages, and was prescribed by them, but as it were on the account of their great ones only, to fence these from Injuries, not for the Common Security, or Benefit of Mankind.

To consider these Heathens in their sundry Common-Wealths, they grasped into their possession whatever they cou'd hold without Reprisals upon them, and then justify'd themselves by *that true pretence*, if rightly apply'd, and when 'tis so, always includes a Reward for others, *the public good*; but this they confin'd to their particular Societies, as if the rest of the World had been nothing to them, no parts of the great Community of Men. The Stronger ever took their Opportunity of the Weaker to pillage and spoil them of what they could; these were always Robbers as far as their rapacious Hands could reach, being like Beasts of Prey; as the same Brute Nature prevail'd in both. No *Chancery* lay between Opulent States, and their never so Innocent less Potent Neighbours, witness the *Romans*, who, tho' the most Civiliz'd of the Heathen Nations, yet could never manage their excessive Greatness with a due notion and sense of Right. They extended their vast Spread-Eagles-wings still where they saw they could probably Conquer, and gave the Stile of Justice to all their violent and usurping Attempts; as *Lactantius* somewhere remarks. And as the States behav'd themselves in their publick Actings, so we may be sure not only the great Ones, but even all others within those Provinces practis'd likewise as far as they were able, using no juster Methods severally, than the publick Example was, or what the ruling Parties prescrib'd. Thus the Mind, or the Man, while immers'd in Body, and operating under the Instincts of Sense will behave himself as to his Brethren, which I wish cou'd not be observ'd in Countries professing the holy Institution and Laws of Christ, or where our own Pilgrimage is.

And

And with reſpect to God, and the ſeveral Duties that every Perfection, or Attribute of His Challenges from us, where the Mind acts according to the Apprehenſions that are excited in it from its Commerce with Body, and with that impairment of its own Faculties that neceſſarily belongs to that manner of its acting, or where the ſenſual Principle prevails, the Man can exert none of theſe bounden Obligations upon him, he can neither contemplate his all-perfect Nature, nor pray to him, nor truſt in him, nor acquieſce under his Portion, or Allotments from him, as he ought to do.

Contemplation and Prayer require our deepeſt, our intenſeſt Thoughts, an Abſtraction from all the Suggeſtions of Body; we muſt have no ſenſible Ideas before us, when we addreſs, or think of God; we muſt then free our ſelves of all Similitude, have no reſemblances in our Minds, which if we ſhould entertain, beſides the Diſturbance it would offer to our preſent Exerciſe, would be down-right Idolatry, while we advance even the moſt inactive ſenſeleſs Nature, namely, Matter, all Similitude being in ſuch, into the place of God, or at leaſt make it a Compound with him, as ſome of the old Heathen did. (*Tull. de N. D. L.* 2. 26.)

Our Prayers muſt be an inward Act, the imployment of our Spirits recollecting themſelves from all the World about us: and as they muſt thus be the Exerciſe of our *better parts*, ſo they muſt be eſpecially determin'd with relation to *theſe* on Heavenly things. And it muſt be alſo the ſevereſt Meditation of a *purify'd Soul* by habits of Vertue, and *ſo capable* of attaining the right Perceptions belonging to *it*, while not perverted, or captivated by Senſe, that can furniſh out the Arguments of a true Faith, and ſo lay the ground of our Reliance on God, or Reſignation to him among the many difficulties of this Life.

But the ſenſual Principle, a Mind exerting it ſelf under the influence of Body can never be able to reach theſe Acts it will ever petition, if it pray at all, and with an irregular vehemency too, wrong matter, very prejudicial to our true Good, ſuch as will expoſe us to manifold hazards of our Spiritual State, *viz.* a great abundance of theſe Worldly Enjoyments,

joyments, and at the beſt, when rightly fixt, 'twill be carry'd off by deſultory Phanſies, wandring Affections, ſuch neceſſarily being thoſe, that mainly depend on a ſenſual Principle more warmly excited, a material Nature in continual Flux, that, where 'tis ſo concern'd, ſo much a cauſe, cannot be the ground of a ſteddy Thought; and 'twill always be full of Diffidence and Doubt, as it ſees no farther than preſent things, if it admit at all of theſe great Duties, Faith in its juſt extent, or Prayer, and the Object of them; but where it is in its proper predominancy, it will certainly beget a Renunciation of both. This is the dark Cave of Atheiſm, and of all deſponding, deſpairing Thoughts, *viz.* the ſenſual Nature in its prevailing Habit, when the *Mind* forms its Apprehenſions thence, *which* muſt needs then have very ſhort Proſpects of things, whatever its pure Capacities are, and very perverted Notions of them, ſee them much otherwiſe than they are in themſelves, while it not only beholds them thro' ſuch a thick Atmoſphere, but as it were in an Animal Mixture and Confuſion therewith. For according to the Aſcendency this has over the Man, as it is the exalted Principle of his Life, he diſcerns more obſcurely, or nothing at all of the great univerſal Spirit, God, his comprehenſive Providence as to every event, eſpecially concerning any of his beſt, his reaſonable Creatures; nor of a State of Immortality after this preſent Period is ended; he cannot look above the Sphere of Matter, what affects his Senſes, and ſo denies all ſpiritual Subſiſtences, a God with his ſeveral Adminiſtrations, and Acts; as the perpetuity of particular Beings likewiſe, whoſe Contexture he concludes will at laſt be diſſolv'd, and they return'd into their common Nature, a firſt Matter, whence all things happily ſprung by chance, being the only eternal Subject he can conceive; thus the *Stoics* from ſuch a kind of Philoſophy argued even with reſpect to Souls themſelves. † They maintain'd theſe to be capable of Diſſolution, and that they ſhould be actually diſſolv'd in ſome time; the more immers'd in this Animal State, or the worſt ſort to continue leſs ſpace after Death; and even the moſt Vertuous, (who had exemplify'd the higheſt Morals, moſt liv'd up to their Reaſon, moſt reſiſted their lower Appetites, or Propenſions of

† *Tull. Tuſc. Q. L.* 1. 63. *M. Ant. L.* 6. 24. *Lipſ. Phyſ. Stoic. Lib.* 3. *Diſſ.* 11.

Fleſh) not to ſurmount their fatal Period, the Conflagration of the World, but then to fall back into the friendly, and congenial Elements, as one ſpeaks, or as another the greateſt of that Sect, *Marcus* the Emperor, into the ſeminal Forms, or be diſpers'd into Atoms; whence we may obſerve their notion of Souls, as to their ſubſtance, that they thought them material or only more refin'd Body.

And therefore this Perſon muſt only be determin'd to *preſent Satisfactions*, to gratifie Senſe in all its Appetites, and his main Deſigns be to compaſs *theſe* without any regard either to the Benefits, or Rights of his Brethren, unleſs as he ſtands in Society with them, theſe comport with his own. This is the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, the wiſdom of the Fleſh, that I am afraid ſtill ſo governs even the new World of the Meſſias in defiance of all that he has done; which the Apoſtle immediately ſtiles Enmity againſt God, where he mentions it, that can never be ſubject to his Laws, but ever vehemently reſiſts him, and urges a contrary behaviour to him. 'Tis *the Spirit of the World* ſtill reigning in it, or of *the natural Man that receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, nor can know* or perceive *them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcern'd.* Rom. 8. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

I do not deny but that there may be great fervours of Devotion, rapturous Affections even truly plac'd on their Heavenly Father, fervent Charity towards their Brethren, ſtrong pangs of Remorſe for any inordinacies of carnal Appetite, which will produce as vehement Purpoſes or Reſolutions againſt them; I do not deny, nay, I doubt not but all theſe may be in Perſons acted by the ſenſual or lower Life, and as this is a more impetuous Principle, much more in them at certain times, than in the truly Religious. But then theſe not being of an uniform Tenour, but ſome tranſient Ardours that quickly cool, not bringing forth a conſtant Duty, a Goſpel Holineſs in its ſeveral reſpects, but being often interrupted by ſome greater Miſdemeanours, neglects again of theſe bounden Offices, even where they moſt indiſpenſably relate to God, a Heart mainly ſet, as may be well obſerv'd, towards the things of this Earth, one may be fully convinc'd that theſe gleams of Piety are only Mechanical, proceeding from a certain temper of Body, and not from a rightly diſpos'd Spirit, a Chriſtian habit, or frame of Mind.

Let

Let us now conſider the Fates and Conſequences of this depraved Eſtate. And firſt, what reſtleſs Turmoils muſt this ſenſual Principle, that can never be ſatisfy'd when it governs the Man without any Laws, or Reſtrains upon it; and what outward Afflictions, what Enmities and Conteſts with other People, whom it will ever be invading in ſome reſpect, will it expoſe him to? This is evident, and obvious to all: unbridl'd Luſts, ſenſual Affections, or Deſires let looſe, are thoſe that firſt fight within us, cauſe inteſtine Wars, and Diſturbances at home, and then render us obnoxious to all the Diſtreſſes that can befal us from abroad, every one being as ready in this common Circumſtance, this ſunk habit, to revenge himſelf, as any elſe can be to attempt an Injuſtice or Fraud upon him; ſo that this will found perpetual Miſchiefs continually bandied from one another: (*Gen.* 16. 12.) Not to mention the Bodily Diſeaſes, the Pains and Maladies, as it were in the foreign ſubject to ones reaſonable part, ones true ſelf, that attend ſuch courſes: As neither to inſiſt on the impairments of Underſtanding, the blindneſs and ignorance, and wrong Sentiments brought into it by this means, when one muſt walk in the dark, not having the ſatisfaction of a right Notion, and rule of Duty, a ſteady Principle to live upon; this great advantage, if not belonging to a rational Creature, all Mankind, yet which certainly is the privilege of thoſe who are bleſs'd with the Oracles of God, being loſt thro' the deluſions of *cuſtomary ſin, vices long indulg'd, or perſever'd in.* Whence the Judgment is deprav'd, the true ſenſe of the turpitude of Sin wholely taken away, and that other great Faculty beſtow'd on Man, his free Determination, the liberty of his Will, ſo mightily ſtrengthned by the Grace of the Goſpel towards the better part, a holy Converſation, aboliſh'd likewiſe; ſo that ſuch a Perſon muſt be altogether manag'd by his Appetites and Paſſions, as thoſe drive him on, and he ſtill *voluntarily* undergo the worſt ſort of Slavery in the whole World, tho' he has experienc'd the Miſchiefs of it a thouſand times; I ſay, not to inſiſt on theſe real Miſeries, nor to bring into the account the Pangs of Conſcience, that are *nearer Sufferings*, not ſo remote to us as our Bodies, in the centre of Perception, namely the Reproaches and Upbraidings of his Mind for his Britiſh Behaviour, ſo utterly diſagreeing to the Dictates or Verdicts of Reaſon, which Upbraidings muſt needs be the greateſt natural Torment, be-

ſides what may be inflicted, in a thinking Nature, when it cannot endure its own cenſure of its Ways or Actions, and ſo as often as it reflects on them muſt ever accuſe and corrode it ſelf. I ſay, not to mention theſe pangs of Conſcience, that will then certainly even here purſue Men, when the Appetites are ſometime ſurfeited; Such contrary Tortures are in the breaſts of Sinners, and ſo by that means never intermitting Pains there of one ſort or other.

Nor can ſuch a Perſon have any comforts flowing from the Deity, whatſoever his ſufferings may at any time be, who has ſuch dark Apprehenſions thereof, no grounds of a ſure Faith in God, ſo as to enjoy the mighty ſupports that even the notion of an infinite Being of ſuch Moral Perfections affords Mankind; and who is alſo under ſuch oppoſite Habits, ſo quite contrarily diſpos'd to him, that he can no ways partake of him in his bliſful Emanations, that ſo freely deſcend on every Individual of the reaſonable World, where they are not repuls'd, or where a right temper and frame of Spirit can receive them. Theſe are the Miſeries that accompany an Unregenerate State (if they were not rather to be felt, than deſcrib'd) even in this World.

But the diſmal Scene commences after; here are ſome intervals of a pleaſurable Entertainment, ſuch as the ſenſual Faculties afford, and compenſate Men withal in this ſtate, where their alluring Objects are, and they can exert their proper Acts, tho' theſe Pleaſures be of an inferiour kind, below the great Enjoyments belonging to Men, and engage ſuch Fatigues in the purchaſe of them, and ever defeat our Promiſes from them, and are ſo ſhort liv'd at the beſt. But when we come into the ſpiritual World, where the Objects are of a refined Nature, and require ſuch Faculties, and taſts in us, the ſenſitive Scene being over and finiſh'd with its whole delights, we muſt then be capable of enjoying God, and living upon him in the pure Exerciſes that refer to him, or elſe we muſt needs be miſerable for ever. But it muſt be by a habit of rectify'd Reaſon thro' the privileges of the Goſpel, a ſpiritual Senſation advanc'd in our Minds by a due Obſervance of all the parts of a Chriſtian Vertue, that theſe, *viz.* our Minds can be able to exert their own Powers, and follow the Tendences that are born in them, perceive, and reliſh abſtractedly and freely from the infection of Body; 'tis this alone that can render us qualify'd, and truly prepare us for that great Imployment, our utmoſt felicity of Converſing with God, and his

his dwelling in us, or we in him. 1 *John* 3. 24. 4. 12, 13. But this Principle is dead in profligate Sinners, the contrary temper, a ſenſual Habit, not ſlain in the opportunity allow'd for that purpoſe, poſſeſſing their Souls; and therefore unleſs this can be mortify'd, and the other reviv'd in our after Manſions, which the Scriptures afford us no hopes of, they being only alive to the things of ſenſe and this World, as they went off hence, muſt ever be coveting quite unattainable Satisfactions there, with bitter Reſentments, eager Remorſes among vain Deſires, and ſhall be able to partake of no bliſful Entertainments, even when they are in the proper Region, where theſe chiefly are.

This is the ſpiritual Death, or Death of Sin, when the firſt Propenſion of the Soul towards God is diverted, and loſt thro' Foreign Deſires promoted in it from its Commerce with this groſs Body, its habitual purſuance of the Delights of Senſe; and its Communion intercepted with that only true beatifying Object, that it cannot imploy it ſelf upon him in a pure Contemplation of his boundleſs Attributes, which is one part of the great Happineſs of Intelligent Creatures, nor admit his gracious Influences into it: but ſtanding quite in another Inclination to a ſenſual State now diſmiſs'd, and gone, that only had its Reaſon for our Probation a little while, it will ever be hankering after theſe poor Vanities, like the *Iſraelites* when they were remov'd from *Egypt*, except (as was intimated before) its preſent habit can be chang'd even here in this ſecond Life, which is a Dependance altogether groundleſs, nay, which has the greateſt Argument againſt it, when People have neglected the accepted Time, the Day of Salvation graciouſly offer'd them; or except God in the effect of his infinite Goodneſs would render us happy, as it were forcibly without our ſelves, which is impoſſible, the nature of Happineſs being ſuch, that it muſt ever proceed from a voluntary Spring, and free Actions in a reaſonable Being; tho' God declaring even his infinite Goodneſs in other particulars, all with relation to *this World*, and our attainment of Holineſs, *here*, we may be well ſatisfy'd that ſuch a forcible change of Mens Tempers, if it could be, would be no proper Inſtance of his *goodneſs*, and that no Reſerves *thereof* are to be expected afterwards. This is the ſad diſmal State with the Infelicities that attend Mankind in both Worlds without the Benefits of a Redeemer,

deemer and being Born again, or Renew'd in the Spirit of their Minds thro' him.

What poſitive Puniſhment, and to what degree may be pour'd forth on ſuch Rebels to their Maker, nay, who have not only contemn'd his Authority, but inſulted his Mercy in Chriſt Jeſus, *trodden under foot the Son of God*, and the Ranſom he purchas'd with his own Blood, we cannot define: however we may be certain from the Expreſſions of Scripture, whether literally taken, or to denote *Sufferings* by Metaphorical Language, that *theſe* ſhall be very grievous ones, tho', if they ſhould be our own Portion, we muſt confeſs ſuch Offenders deſerve.

Let us now ſee how our Redeemer has deliver'd us out of this State, and what we muſt contribute towards our complete, our entire Deliverance from our ſelves; as likewiſe how the Redeemed, *viz.* true Chriſtians will behave themſelves, and what their Happineſs redounding thence muſt be.

And as to the Benefits we partake of from Chriſt, we are fully aſſur'd that he Mediated for us (who were in a State of Enmity with God) by his own Blood, offer'd himſelf a Propitiation, and Sacrifice on our behalf; the Dignity of whoſe Perſon, he being as far exalted above all the Orders or Degrees of Angels, as the Creator of them is, and the voluntarineſs of the Oblation entring into the Atonement, and adding an infinite Merit to it, he not only procur'd us the Favour of God, Remiſſion or Pardon of all our Offences on the only poſſible Term of our Happineſs, a true Repentance, but likewiſe obtain'd ſuch Communications of the Spirit to be even *a preventing Influence*, and conferr'd upon us without any Preparedneſs in our Tempers for them, (as *the firſt Graces* are ſo conferred according to the manifold Teſtimonies of Scripture (*Phil.* 2. 13. *Eph.* 2. 3, 4. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 3. 5. *John* 15. 16.) or elſe we could never be partakers of them in our fallen State. And we may even demonſtrate *theſe* from Experience: we often find ſuch workings in our Minds, as could not probably proceed from them in the uſe of their own Faculties; as Checks of Conſcience then purſuing us, while we are juſt about engaging in any unwarrantable Act, and the Animal Affections being afloat overcome Conſideration, and will not admit of any ſober Thought; as likewiſe immediate Inſtantaneous Enlightnings, ſudden Admonitions caſt into us concerning

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ſome important Duty, or Behaviour, whereas the progreſs of Reaſon is in a Chain of Things by Deductions, or Inferences, and the Leſſons it teaches in the juſt and due Exerciſe of it ſelf, not as it were a flaſh in our Minds; as alſo *Thoughts* often long detain'd, or continu'd on our Spirits, and preſs'd upon them, *theſe* ſtill purſuing us with great Importunity towards ſome Inſtance of Vertue, or to heighten our Remorſe for ſome ill Behaviour: when as our Minds ſo beſet with the Affections of Senſe, are roving and inconſtant, and eſpecially not apt to fix on a Pious Meditation, and leaſt of all on ſuch as cauſes Trouble to them; *theſe* ſo haunting our Souls, and overcoming all the Paſtimes of the World to remove them, nay, ſometimes maſtering our utmoſt Contrivance, the whole command we have of our Wills againſt *them*, and at laſt obtaining their happy Effect. Theſe with the other particulars at leaſt muſt be thankfully acknowledg'd to the loving Spirit of God preventing us, and as Convictions thereof. And this bleſſed Spirit with all his ſaving Gifts or Influences is the Procurement of our holy Redeemer, who by his ſo highly Meritorious Sufferings, beſides the Pardon of our Treſpaſſes on the only true Term thereof, (*John* 7. 38. *Tit.* 3. 6.) obtain'd ſuch liberal Meaſures of Grace on our account to attend our ſmalleſt Endeavours with them, nay, even excite theſe firſt of all, as, if we fail not, our Compliance with thoſe Heavenly Succours will reſcue us from the Power of our paſt Offences, ſecure our Chriſtian Behaviour or Vertues againſt every Temptation that ſhall at any time be permitted to befal us, and while we duly peruſe the written Revelation vouchſafed to us, repleniſh our Minds with all Sacred Knowledge, influential on Godlineſs, every neceſſary Article of a Saving Faith.

We have theſe Advantages, this common Treaſure thro' our Lord's Mediation for all Mankind, as it were extraneous or without our ſelves, but which may be brought into the Faculties of our Souls, and rendred an inward might of theirs, if we pleaſe. The Graces of the Spirit, if we hinder not their force, will enable us for the higheſt Exerciſes of Piety; every inveterate Appetite of our Natures, all the Aſſaults of Sin upon us muſt ſubmit to him, being allow'd to poſſeſs our Minds, and diſplay his *infinite Efficacy* in them, *that* can only be reſiſted by our ſelves, or the obſtinacy of our Wills againſt him. God

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will exhibit the ſame invincible Strength in us, and along with us for Moral Purpoſes, that he wrought in Chriſt after a Phyſical manner, when he rais'd him from the Dead. (*Eph.* 1. 19, 20.)

Hence then being thus throughly furniſh'd unto all good Works, we muſt be ſure to reduce theſe Heavenly Vertues or Powers into Act, Crucify the whole Body of Sin, the old Man after the Image of the diſobedient *Adam* with the *Affections and Luſts*, (*Gal.* 5. 24.) ſo that we pronounce not of our Satisfactions, nor eſtabliſh our Notions and Eſtimate of Things thro' the Inſtigations of *theſe*, or with reſpect to *them*: we muſt thro' theſe gracious ſupplies afforded us, that are only effectual in our Endeavours with them, repreſs and keep under the Appetites of Body, reſcue our Minds from the moſt unnatural ſubjection to them, that they may be able to exert themſelves freely, poſſeſs a *clear Reaſon* retriev'd, and ſet at liberty from ſenſual Byaſſes, *which* ſo being a right Conduct of Life, and diſcerning things truly, as far as its natural Sphere reaches, will eaſily ſubmit to the farther Enlightnings of *Divine Grace*, *that* always both prevents us, contributes to the forming of ſuch a juſt Habit of intelligent Creatures, and then more plentifully comes in with it.

Now this true Chriſtian Principle, (our reaſonable Natures, or Faculties recover'd into their free Eſtate, and then attended with more liberal, or leſs interrupted Influences of Grace) where it informs, or directs the Man; in reſpect of himſelf, it prompts to the ſtricteſt Temperance, or Purity, even with regard to the inmoſt Propenſions, or Motions of the Heart, that theſe ever be repreſs'd, where they are enormous, and being brought into Act would be a Tranſgreſſion of the Goſpel-Law: It inſpires a Man with the trueſt Thoughts, both of the Entertainments or Delights of Senſe, and thoſe relating to Mind, that the one are mere Brutal Inſtances (if ſome kinds of Intemperance be not worſe than thoſe, without any Example in inferiour Creatures) quite unbecoming a reaſonable Being; and that when the Soul once conſents to ſuch, or entertains it ſelf with polluted Phanſies, (the Reſolution of this our thinking Part one way or other, being that which determines the quality of our Actions) the Treſpaſs is over in a right account, there laying no difference between our allowing the luſcious and unlawful reliſhes

liſhes of Senſe within our ſelves, and the acting there of, but the Contagion of the Fact, or the Injury reflecting and redounding on others in the latter caſe; and 'twill ſuggeſt to us, that the uſe of our upper Natures, as independently as we can of their groſs Companions, the pure and abſtracted Exerciſes of our Spirits on their right Objects, being our ſuitable Acts, or proper to our kind, muſt conſtitute all our unallay'd Pleaſures, our true Delights.

And with reſpect to our Brethren, who partake with us in the ſame nature, it will incite an equal regard, the ſame common Offices, where opportunity is afforded, to all of theſe, that it would inſiſt on in the neareſt Intereſt, or Inſtance of Self. It helps a Man, as it delivers him from the confinements of Senſe, to a true notion of the Grounds, and Reaſons of a general Beneficence, or undiſtinguiſh'd Advantage where he is capable thereof, as well to others as his own Soul; not only that every Perſon ſtands in the ſame Prerogatives both with regard to the parts he conſiſts of, and the Goſpel-Promiſes, or the Heavenly Bounties he may enjoy, if he pleaſes, (ſo that according to an equitable Verdict no Preference lays) but becauſe the Benefits we confer on others are more, ſo on our own account, reflect larger and better Advantages to our ſelves: when we ſupply the wants of any in any reſpect, there not only ſprings up a great ſatisfaction in our own Breaſts, the Reſults of Love, the ſweet, the moſt delightful Paſſion of Joy, as we have defeated the Afflictions of our Brethren in ſome meaſure, at leaſt afforded them a preſent Relief, if not mended their caſe for afterwards, which muſt needs communicate the ſame comfort, wherever the true Chriſtian Temper and Sympathy is; not to reckon the Pleaſure that ſo belongs to beneficent Perſons, of their being in the favour, as they may well ſuppoſe, and better regard of all People, which gives them the confidence of their own Kind, that they can freely addreſs any of them, and affords all the benefits of Converſe and Society, that Men are ſo made for, that is ſo neceſſary in Humane Life, with one another. Or if becauſe of their *other Vertues*, (*all which* are link'd in a Chain together, ſo that one cannot really and in truth be without the reſt) the Reproofs *theſe* are in a wicked World, they be diſappointed of the due Treatment they might reaſonably expect, and meet only

with Inſults inſtead thereof, 'twill more than ſupport them, that they have done their part, been Friendly and Bountiful as they were able, and not deſerv'd ſuch uſage from any; I ſay, not only theſe Advantages attend Beneficence, where Men are ſo looſned from Self, and the World, as to be able to procure them, and be Poſſeſſors of them; but one far greater is ſtill behind, our Minds are improv'd, and gradually carry'd on by the proper Acts of this great Goſpel-Affection of Charity, to farther Attainments of the Habit thereof, and ſo ſtill can admit of freer Communications of God's good Spirit, or Grace into them, which if they can admit, be ſure they ſhall enjoy. Theſe Advantages queſtionleſs in all reſpects the firſt Chriſtians experienc'd, who ſo bravely ſurmounted the intanglements of *Property*, (the great Bane of moſt Vertues among Chriſtians) and reſign'd *it* up among all their Brethren, equally diſtributing, or bequeathing their Eſtates, *as every one had need*, more to others than they left for their own ſhare, if thoſe needed more.

This Chriſtian Principle moves the Man upon the generous grounds of Value, or Eſteem of his own Kind, and Friendſhip towards it, and as its Inſtances are repeated, continually promotes that happy Temper in him, as free from all Suſpicions, as private Deſigns. As to the behaviour of Heathens towards their Brethren, or whoſe Actions proceed not on the Goſpel-doctrines, ſuch a Principle in their Soul, all their Politics, and Morals in this reſpect are influenc'd from a Jealouſie of Humane Nature, to fence as well as they can againſt Inſults and Injuries, and offer leſs Hardſhips to other People on this alone ſlaviſh ſcore, that they return not greater, or retaliate upon them. Good Humour and Benignity towards their Creator's and their own Image, which acts the Chriſtian, is no Motive with them. This is the Spirit of the Leviathan, and other Materialiſts, as I may ſo call them, of the *Epicurean* Herd, who have writ *of Governments*, and put *their Syſtems of Ethics* upon us, that have their Foundations in Senſe only, *viz.* Reaſon hindred as to its true proſpects, and warp'd by it.

And as to the Duties reſpecting God, the Man thus retriev'd into the freedom of his Reaſon from its Servitude to Senſe, and thus capable of the Influences of the Spirit of Grace, and thus enliven'd or quickn'd thereby, he can eaſily baffle all

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the attacks of Atheism, carry his Faith and Assurance above the Region of Matter, believe an eternal Omnipresent Spirit no ways liable to Bodily Eyes, and other Immortal Spirits likewise created by him, that can only be the subjects of Reason and Thought, one whereof he knows is lodg'd, or confin'd within his feeble outside, his Tabernacle of Clay, and performs all the intelligent Acts there.

Discerning their reasonableness, the relation they bear to the Nature of Man, he will readily observe every Rule of the Gospel, the strictest Precepts of Righteousness and Vertue, and having purify'd his Mind by that means, brought down the stubborn Principle of Flesh, the Seat of haughty Conceit and Pride, and no Interest of his laying cross to the most comfortable Notion of an Almighty, Good, and Just Being, he will not only entertain this great Doctrine without the least diffidence, but extremely triumph in it, build all his Trust or Affiances upon it, and make it the support of his whole Life, whatever Circumstances he be concern'd among; giving up his Assent to whatever is reveal'd, after his Conviction of the Revelation it self, tho' he no ways comprehends the internal Reason or Mode thereof; as not only that one Spirit existing from nothing, or without any Cause pervades the Universe, is present in every part thereof, to observe and govern all Events, but that there are three complete Subsistences, distinguish'd every one by personal Acts, in the strictest unity of a spiritual Being. This he is fully persuaded of, being plainly deliver'd in the inspir'd Books, notwithstanding that he cannot account for it by any Faculties he has: the Carnal Part being well subdu'd, as I observ'd before, in which Arrogance is founded, there is nothing to oppose God, but the Mind presently submits to whatever he declares, even concerning the unconceivable Mysteries of his Nature, as every Creature that must needs be finite in its Powers, the highest Seraphin thinking wisely and understanding it self, will certainly do.

Such a Person, so acting above the Principle of Sense, and he only, can be duly Conversant in Spiritual Exercises, with a just Intention address God, offer up a more fervent Supplication to him, entertain himself suitably in Contemplation of him, the study of his All-perfect Being, or Nature, as as he's more deli-

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ver'd from the importunity of the Fleſhy Appetites, that ſo obſtruct theſe bliſsful Inſtances: whence he will enlarge the Faculties of his Soul thro' this right determination, this due uſe of them, that they ſhall be able to diſcern more of God in their own mere act, while they attain their native Aſpirings more. Yet nevertheleſs but a ſmall part of this Sacred Knowledge is thus obtain'd in this happy Perſon, being ſo qualify'd in his own Temper, the holy Spirit will diffuſe himſelf freely upon him, and ſtill by farther improv'd Beams, as this Chriſtian Habit is more advanc'd, till his own weak Faculties be as it were abſorpt in the Rays of this Comforter, and he only ſee, and act thro' Him, as far as God can reveal himſelf to a Virtuous Soul, a Saint of His, or work by him, and produce the Fruits of Holineſs in him conſiſtently with the Freedom of a voluntary Creature, that muſt have its Behaviour reckoned to it ſelf. This bleſſed Spirit will then be another vital Form within him wholy over-ruling his own Spirit, which being more recover'd into its pure Nature, and leſs ſubject to *the will of the Fleſh*, the Root of Diſobedience, or Corrupt Deſire, muſt be more eaſily governable by him, under his Conduct in all things, more ſecurely led thro' his clearer Suggeſtions to every Inſtance of a Goſpel-Behaviour. So that ſuch a Perſon may ſay with St. *Paul*, 'Tis not he that lives, but this bleſſed Inſpirer, this Spirit of Chriſt that lives in him, (*Gal.* 2. 20.) This would be the circumſtance of all Men, if this gently operating, but invincible might, where it is duly comply'd withal, were not hindred, mainly as to moſt People, altogether in ſome, by unmortify'd Carnal Deſires. For this Heavenly Advocate our Lord obtain'd for us, acting conformably to our free Conſtitution, in ſtill ſmall Voices, gentle Whiſpers to our Souls, or Breathings upon them, ſuch as leave the Compliance entirely at our Pleaſure, and the Action our own, with the Retributions belonging to it: his workings can no ways poſſibly be perceiv'd among reigning Affections, Appetites ſet in their full Strength whether to ſenſual Delights, or Profits; nor he attain any of his bleſſed Effects in thoſe Perſons, where theſe are after ſuch a manner, as our Saviour tells us, moſt part of People being ſuch, that *the world cannot receive him.* (*John* 14. 17.)

Now when we have arriv'd at this, as I may ſay, Science of God

God thro' our honeſt Compliance with the firſt Motions of Divine Grace, as alſo faithfully purſu'd a Vertuous Attainment in every reſpect, to purchaſe farther Meaſures thereof, and ſo have obtain'd in theſe Heavenly Enlightnings a more convictive Aſſurance of his infinite Goodneſs, ſo abundantly exemplify'd to us-ward, his Fatherly Providence, or care of us here, and the everlaſting Joys, the Rewards he has prepar'd for our Chriſtian Obedience after this frail State is ended; when by this means we have arriv'd at theſe more enlarg'd notices of God, and more fully diſcover'd that he is *Love*, we muſt needs be induc'd, theſe certain Concluſions laid up in our Minds cannot but have a prevailing Efficacy on Humane Liberty to a more vigorous and earneſt Endeavour of a Goſpel-Holineſs, if it were only in Gratitude to our great Benefactor, that we ſhould not offend him, and not a means of our own Bliſs: which Goſpel-Holineſs will ever draw down more plentiful Influxes of the bleſſed Comforter, the Spirit of Truth into our Minds in the ſame degree that it ſelf is, and ever augment this Science of God, a Goſpel-Knowledge, and Vertue or Piety being mutual Cauſes of one another.

Let us now obſerve what attends this Chriſtian Habit, how it recompences Men for their Pious Diligence, their Honeſt Labours in acquiring it, what its happy Effects are. And when our Actions anſwer the true bent, the firſt inclination ſtampt on our Souls, are under the direction of free Reaſon, and the more plentifully diſplay'd Beams of the Spirit, when our Behaviour is thus govern'd in all reſpects, how ſecure ſhall we be from every thing that can interrupt our Happineſs, whether the Diſturbances that always accompany a ſinful Inſtance in any particular, a purſuance of ſenſual Affection too far, or Diſeaſes of Body, or Remorſes of Mind, that immediately follow the ſinful Inſtance, or will not long ſtay behind, eſpecially this latter and worſe ſort, that at leaſt will awaken in another World, if perchance *thro' the deceitfulneſs of ſin* they be ſtifl'd here, when being ſtript of all ſenſitive Delights we ſhall have nothing to afford never ſo little interruption to them!

But we ſhall not only be thus negatively happy by this means, but, as far as our Natures are Purify'd and Capable, enjoy all the poſitive Degrees of Happineſs: every ſenſual Extravagancy repreſs'd

preſs'd, every Allurement or Temptation repell'd founds a Satisfaction much above what reſults from our ſhameful Compliance with it, which will be no momentary, tranſient Buſineſs, but ever endure, and be a comfortable Reflection in our Minds. The ſubjecting of our inferiour Natures, and the government of our ſelves according to our beſt, our reaſonable Faculties, and the holy Spirit influencing theſe, muſt needs afford us the moſt pleaſurable Reſentment, one of the chiefeſt, the trueſt Happineſs belonging to Men.

But when theſe beſt Faculties of ours in the light of Grace are determin'd on their proper, their moſt ſuitable Object, *viz.* God, towards which they can never move with too much Tranſport, what a Theatre of Heavenly Thoughts will this offer to them, or they be then furniſh'd withal, ſuch as anſwer our Natures, and can ſatisfie all the Capacities of our Souls, and which will ever entertain them with freſh wonders, while they are fixt on a perfection that has no bounds, and can never be comprehended by created Beings?

And as to the quiet enjoyment of our Lives, theſe farther Diſcoveries into this vaſt Ocean, where there is ſtill an infinite Proſpect, or Sight beyond, *viz.* God, how will they eſtabliſh our Affiance in him, render us ſecure in our dependence on him, not only advance a reſign'd temper or ſubmiſſion in our Spirits with regard to *his ſundry Methods* with us, but a chearful Obedience to *his hardeſt Precepts*, tho' we ſhould not diſcern the Reaſons of *either, the one, or the other*; becauſe being then more fully perſuaded of his both immenſe Wiſdom and Goodneſs, we ſhall be certain that he can order nothing in our behalf but with relation to our true advantage, our chiefeſt good!

And with reference to Prayer, the indiſpenſable Duty of our ſort of Creatures ſo frail, ſo indigent as we are, *theſe clearer, and farther notices of God* can only ſupport a true Devotion, enable us to pray with a due Attention conſidering his awful, his tremendous Majeſty, and for Bleſſings in general without determining him, or particularizing upon him, which always proceeds from ſome unſubdu'd Carnal Affections, that are ever moſt eager for their proper Gratifications, ſuch as we ſhould continually be reſtrain'd from; and ſo *theſe* will place us indifferent, as we ſhould be in the diſpoſals of Heaven, the ſpecial diſtributions

ſtributions of the Divine Foreſight with reſpect to any of us, that God ſees moſt convenient for us, or our preſent ſtate moſt requires. As theſe enlarg'd Evidences of God will abundantly ſatisfie us, that whatever he does in our private Concerns, every particular Diſpenſation of his to us-ward is determin'd from Goodneſs, and the kind working of a Fatherly Love: So they alone can furniſh us with the Reaſons of Thankfulneſs at all times, and beget that pious habit in our Souls.

Now theſe aſſur'd Doctrines of a Soveraign Being, which can only be advanc'd from a due conqueſt of the Fleſhly Affections, and the ſreedom of Reaſon, eſpecially imploying it ſelf on the Inſpir'd Writings, and the more liberal, the leſs hindr'd Influences of Divine Grace by that means, ſeeing the natural and proper Effects of the love and benignity of our Heavenly Father are again open'd, and let looſe towards ſinful Men, thro' Chriſt Jeſus; theſe aſſur'd Doctrines of a Soveraign Being, what grounds of undiſturb'd Contentment and Happineſs muſt they be in every ſtate of this preſent Pilgrimage! 'twill be impoſſible that any Events ſhould diſcompoſe us, when we are firmly poſſeſs'd of theſe ſeveral Articles of Faith in God.

But then ſtill farther as we more put forth theſe proper Duties of Faith in him, Prayer, Affiance, Reſignation, and the like, we form our ſelves more into his Image or Similitude, and become more capable of his pure Emanations, the only true Light, and Wiſdom proceeding from him, and he actually too diſplays theſe more in our Minds, that we ſhall apprehend, and know thro' them, that is, with reſpect to the reveal'd Truths, which only are of true concernment to us, much above the reach of our own Faculties, or what they could attain in their beſt ſtate by any Improvements they are capable of, theſe reveal'd Truths being the moſt important Objects of our Knowledge will appear more evident, and brighter to our Souls in the Beams of the Spirit more plentifully diffus'd, or acting upon them, when by means at leaſt of ſome degree of a ſuitable frame, a more advanc'd Goſpel Temper, there is leſs Impediment to thoſe Heavenly Shinings.

Whence our principal Thoughts, our main Deſires, the Themes of our Converſe, the delights we take in the Society of our Brethren, will be all with regard to God and Vertue; which

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may be a ſign to our ſelves that we are in this bleſs'd State, as our Saviour ſpeaks concerning a truly Regenerate Perſon, *That which is born of the ſpirit is ſpirit.* John 3. 6.

We ſhall then be intimately united to God, partake of a bleſſed Communion with him in all the Bounties of his diffuſive Nature, as we attain to be true Chriſtians, or are created again in Chriſt Jeſus after his Image; (*Eph.* 4. 23.) we ſhall thus be thoſe Sheep of our Saviour, that are ſafe in his Father's hand, whom none can be able to pluck away from him, (*John* 10. 28, 29.) being kept by the Power of God thro' Faith unto Salvation. (*James* 1. 5.) Theſe are the great Enjoyments, and Happineſs that a Chriſtian Temper poſſeſſes, one of an enliven'd Soul, a Perſon quickned by the Spirit of God enjoys even in this Life among all the Perplexities and Troubles of it.

But when we come into the Heavenly part of this bleſs'd ſtate, theſe groſly conſtituted, theſe refractory Bodies to the motions of our Minds being chang'd into Celeſtial, Spiritualiz'd ones, compliant in all things; and the Pious Habits, the Propenſions we have gain'd from a Life of Vertue, and towards God exerting themſelves freely with the *Influences of Grace, that* now informing ſuch diſpos'd Subjects are under no reſtraints, what bright diſplays of Divine Truth ſhall we perceive in our Minds? what farther diſcoveries of the Myſteries of the Deity ſhall we be ever repleniſh'd withal? how will the deep contrivances of the wiſdom of God, and his infinite Love, not only in the Creation, but more ſignally in the manner of his Redemption of the lapſed World, and his Goverment of it, his ſeveral Diſpenſations with regard to the untoward diſpoſitions of his free Creatures, whom he beſtow'd ſo much of his own Prerogative upon, or made them ſuch Images of himſelf? how will *theſe great Subjects*, that we ſo little attain at preſent, the knowledge whereof muſt moſt entertain our pure Minds, and unite them to God with an inſeparable Affection that nothing can remove, how will theſe ſtill more appear, and be manifeſted to us, *which* will ever afford our Minds thus without all Impediments, thus in their utmoſt preparation, freſh Scenes, unperceiv'd Inſtances both of Wiſdom and Goodneſs, till they can arrive at Omniſcience, or comprehend Infinity, that is, throughout endleſs Ages? Being with St. *Paul*, and even in a more purify'd Habit than he

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then was, literally and really in Body and Spirit rapt up into the third Heaven, we ſhall ſee and diſcern unutterable Things, that our narrow Languages anſwering our ſcant Knowledge here can no ways expreſs, nor we now apprehend, if a charitable Angel ſhould be induc'd to declare them to us, the Glories of the Spiritual World, and the Divine Actings with reſpect to the Souls of Men, far tranſcending the wonders of this material one. New Faculties ſhall be then afforded us, or, which are now hindred thro' the diſadvantages of this State, open'd in our Minds; whence we ſhall diſcern naked Spirit, the ſubſtance of immaterial Natures, even the great Omnipreſent Creator of all, by as evident a ſight, as we now do Body.

To ſee God which is the Promiſe to the Pure in Heart, (*Matt.* 5. 8.) thoſe that follow Holineſs, (*Heb.* 12. 14.) not thro' a Glaſs darkly, that is thro' the groſs Inſtruments of our outward *Senſes*, which reaſon for the moſt takes its firſt hints from, and works or exerciſes it ſelf upon, tho' *they* cannot admit, or at all acquaint us even with the contexture of Earthly Bodies; to ſee God not by means of *theſe*, from the Characters we gather of his infinite Perfections in this viſible Univerſe, but face to face, know even as we are known, (1 *Cor.* 13. 12.) to ſee him as he is (1 *John* 3. 2.) plainly diſtinguiſhes between the knowledge of this, and the other World, and one would think, ſets forth another mode of Apprehenſion of the now unperceivable Objects there, anſwerable to the preſent Conviction of our Senſes and corporeal Sight.

Indeed we may be ſatisfy'd of the Being of Spirit, as aſſuredly as we can be of Matter, but then this is by long Deductions, laborious Demonſtration, not immediate Intuition or a preſent glance, which ſeems to explain the foremention'd Phraſes: the one kind of theſe ways of Knowledge, as affording ſufficient Evidence of the greateſt Truths, if we duly imploy our Faculties about them, being proper for our Probation or the Trial of our Honeſty, and the other for the Reward thereof.

Now this Apprehenſion or Knowledge of God after an Intuitive manner, as it muſt be larger, and more comprehen-

ſive, what a rapturous Love of him will it kindle in our Breaſts, that Paſſion that founds our utmoſt Happineſs when thus rightly plac'd? How will this command all our Appetites towards him, and ſtill create new ones as the former are anſwer'd, and have drunk their fill! (*Eccluſ.* 24. 21.) Eager Deſires that can never be ſatisfy'd are a true cauſe of our Felicity here, by means whereof as our Thirſt is more, we ſhall continually more Communicate with him, and be always drawing down freſh Supplies from that only inexhauſtible Spring, which will ſend forth Rivers of Pleaſure for evermore.

This is the Chriſtian Habit or Principle, a Revival from the dead State of Nature, when thro' a Courſe of Goſpel-Obedience we have well maſter'd the Affections of Senſe, the lower Gratifications that the Soul perceives and enjoys from thence, and ſo partake of larger Communications of Grace or the Divine Nature: 'tis this that makes us capable of our true Felicity, the Kingdom of our Saviour, (*which is within us*, as he tells us, *Luke* 17. 21.) both here, and hereafter.

And thus having given an account of the freer Influences of *the holy Spirit* in the Souls of Men, as they have more prepar'd themſelves by a Goſpel-Virtue, I would not be underſtood concerning Revelation properly ſpeaking, as if I meant, that *he* ſhould diſcover ſome farther Inſtances of the Mind of God to us-ward, than is declar'd in the New Teſtament, a higher ſtate of Holineſs now requir'd, (as ſome fondly talk of the Kingdom of the Spirit (ſome more particulars to be believ'd, or practis'd; (not to mention ſome Doctrines, and Explications of certain Places repugnant to the Tenour of the reſt of the Scriptures, which muſt proceed from another Author) or that *he* ſhould repeat by ſome new Teachers, and ſuch Gifts in them as *he* beſtow'd on the Apoſtles, even *their very Doctrines*, only perhaps in variety of Expreſſions, which ſo mainly delight ſome People, eſpecially if deliver'd in a Canting Stile, conceited Phraſes, that more ſtrike the Phanſie, than inform the Underſtanding, ſuch as our now pretended Prophets commonly uſe; whereas in truth there is no need of all this, (which if once requiſite

site must be done over again in every Age) but there is no need of this, the whole Counsel of God for the recovery of the lapsed World to his Grace or Favour, and the Methods he us'd to that purpose, being fully deliver'd by such Miraculous Testimony, as cannot reasonably be deny'd; so that those, who will not be indue'd in the exercise of their Freedom to study this Revelation, which, God be thanked, he has given us in Writing, and observe or practice the Terms of their Happiness it proposes, can never certainly be prevail'd upon by any other Courses, that Heaven can design; nor do I mean that this Spirit should dictate words to People (which perhaps he never did either to Prophets or Apostles, only presenting a Scheme of Divine Truths to their Minds, but leaving the Language to themselves to be express'd according to their different ways of Education, and the prevailing Temper in them, as we may observe their Figures and Stile ever answer'd these) I say I do not mean that the Spirit should dictate words to People, enable them to speak even the known Doctrines or Rules of the Gospel after an Extempore manner, which would superfede their own Faculties, and probably be an occasion of their Neglects in Heavenly Knowledge, as it would greatly administer to Spiritual Pride and Contempt of others, both which we may see the example of in a sort of Men among us that only conceit these things of themselves. But my meaning is, that the Spirit communicates such Light and Grace, such clearer Informations of all saving Truths, with respect to the Understanding, such stronger Motives towards the rectifying of the Will, upon our compliance with the means afforded us, our due perusal of the Sacred Volumes, the Dictates of this Spirit, our honest Endeavours in the ways of Godliness, according to the Precepts deliver'd in those Volumes, as will secure us from any dangerous Error in point of Doctrine, and enable us against all our evil Affections for every Vertue of a Christian Life, we ever obediently following his Guidance and comporting with him. This I mean by the larger Gifts of the holy Spirit in a Gospel-state, that being dispens'd on our due Concourse with his first Motions, a Vertuous Temper by that

means after ſome meaſure obtain'd in our Minds, they are only in order to our farther attainment of that Temper, to afford our infirm, lapſed Natures proper Aſſiſtances for that end; not to operate in fluent Diſcourſes, or particular Revelations, when we already have a complete Book given forth by this Spirit of our Faith and Practice, that is, of our whole Duty, what God enjoyns us, or is requir'd of us in the nature of Things, with regard to our eternal Bliſs; and eſpecially we cannot ſuppoſe this holy Inſpirer thus to operate after this manner, where Men imploy not their main Induſtry, do not diligently Meditate in this Heavenly Book, which *Moſes* with reſpect to the Old Teſtament, commanded his Charge the *Iſraelites*, to do Night and Day; (*Deut.* 6. 7. 11. 19.) nor prepare their Minds by a more eminent degree of Goſpel-Morals or Holineſs of Life, as ſome People, who muſt be Conſcious of their Defects in both theſe Inſtances, unreaſonably maintain of themſelves, and others, that they are enabl'd whether to Preach or to Pray, and, I am apt to think, as much without Fore-thought or Study too, as the Apoſtles were.

And then as to this Doctrine of Habits, the eſtabliſhing the Spiritual Life, the Heavenly Felicities and Joys upon them, which I all-along here do, as I do likewiſe the more liberal Gifts of the bleſſed Comforter in our Souls, tho' this may not poſſibly be admitted by all, but a pure Obedience, not as it any ways diſpoſes us for them accounted the Term of thoſe great Rewards, yet this Doctrine, I think, however it may be rejected, plainly appears to be the Import of *the Goſpel-Law*, as *this* is not ſatisfy'd with outward Performances, *Opus operatum*, bare Acts of Obedience, but every where condemns ſuch, giving them their deſerv'd Stile of Hypocriſie, when they are alone, and requiring a compliance of the reaſonable part, a reconcilement of the Heart to its ſeveral Precepts, that theſe be obſerv'd, or conform'd withal in our very Thoughts, which would be quite a needleſs Diſcipline, unleſs an inward frame thus attainable were neceſſary for the Graces our Lord purchaſed, the Joys he propoſes.

And beſides our bleſſed Saviour expreſly ſays, he repeats it

it to us, that we must be born again, or else we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, (*John* 1. 13. 3. 3, 5.) that is, as he explains it, we are to obtain a new Nature, quite in opposition to the Desires of Flesh, have another Temper advanc'd in our Spirits according to the Mind and Will of God, so as that we may be capable of his Heavenly Bliss. And the Apostles frequently tell us in Emblematical Phrases with reference to Christ, that we must *put off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh*, be altogether *dead to them, buried with our* blessed Redeemer *in Baptism*, when taking upon us his holy Profession, we are to renounce those abominable Practices; and likewise *thro' the Faith* of the operation of God, his Almighty Power declaring it self in our honest Endeavours, *We must be raised with him to righteousness of Life*, (Col. 2. 12. Rom. 6. 3.) *That we must crucifie the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts*, whatever proceeds from that evil Principle, (*Gal.* 5. 24.) that we being Dead, as Christians should be, to these Worldly Enjoyments, and *our* true *Life hid with Christ in God*, we must *mortifie the Members* of our Unregenerate Man, *which are set upon the Earth*, Earthly Interests or Pleasures, there recounted by that Apostle (*Col.* 3. 3, 5.) *This old Man* we are injoyn'd again *to put off, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts*, and *to put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness, and true Holiness* (Eph. 4. 22, 24. Col. 3. 9, 10.) we must *be transform'd by the renewing of our Minds*. (Rom. 12. 2.) All which places being so many Testimonies of the holy Spirit, besides the plain Assertion of our Saviour, evidently set forth, that 'tis something beyond a mere Obedience, which duly distinguishing may be accounted the Effect thereof, where sincerely perform'd from just Motives, *viz.* a Habit of Piety, as our Minds are recover'd from the Affections of Body, a Spiritualiz'd Temper, with such sort of Appetites or Desires in it, that disposes Men for their eternal Bliss; not the pure Instances of Obedience only, which may possibly be perform'd, even habitually too, thro' a kind of Mechanism, or for sinister Purposes without any amendment of Spirit, or reformation in the Soul, the sensual Nature with its proper Offspring still being the reigning Princi-

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ple in ſuch Perſons. And the Apoſtle expreſly confirms this, that it muſt be a Habit of Chriſtian Purity, a Triumph or Maſtery over the Deſires of Fleſh, that founds the Diſpoſition for our true Happineſs, declaring likewiſe that an Indulgence of theſe lower Appetites is the Genuine Cauſe of our eternal Sufferings, the fruitful Parent or Seed-plot of our Miſeries, whence they naturally ſpring: *To be carnally minded is death, but to be ſpiritually minded is life and Peace.* And again, *if ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die: but if thro' the ſpirit ye do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live.* (Rom. 8. 6, 13.) and again, *he that ſoweth to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; but he that ſoweth to the ſpirit, ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting.* (Gal. 6. 8.) and again in the latter reſpect only (Rom. 7. 5.) *The motions of ſin do work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*

And indeed I am apt to believe that all the reveal'd Precepts of God are only Warnings of the Events of Things, what will fatally follow the kind of our Moral Behaviour or Actions, and the bent of our Minds one way or t'other, not what is arbitrarily diſpens'd upon them: and methinks this more anſwers the wiſdom of God, when things are ſo conſtituted, that Mens Fortunes attend the Habitudes they are under, and follow their free Actions, or the Diſpoſitions they have brought into their Minds by that means. This renders God as kind to us, as we will be to our ſelves, he thus putting our Happineſs in our own hands, that thro' the Helps he has afforded us in his beloved Son, we may obtain it to what degree we pleaſe; and this acquits him of Severity, which ſome call Injuſtice, on the account of *eternal Puniſhments* for Temporary Faults, when *theſe* are the Fates of Mens Averſion to him, the wicked Temper they have voluntarily acquir'd, and made in themſelves.

I do not deny but that there will be both poſitive Rewards and Puniſhments, but theſe are ſtill founded and have their Cauſe in our own Tempers. And I cannot think but the contrary Doctrine, that the Heavenly Felicites are merely with reſpect to a tenour of Obedience, that may be ſuch an outſide buſineſs, without deriving its effect to the Heart, and not on the ground of ſuch an Effect, or internal Habit;

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I cannot think but this leſſens the Notion of the Divine Wiſdom, as it takes away the relation of the two States, this, and that of Heaven, to one another, not making their Happineſs both of a piece, the ſame Temper or Principle with their proper Enjoyments carry'd on to their perfection there; and as it puts the Circumſtances of the next World, Bleſſedneſs, or Miſery only upon an arbitrary Decree of God, not ſo correſponding with the Natures of things, or conſequential to them: Nor ſeems it a conſiſtent or agreeable Proceeding with a free Creature, that he ſhould have any Events attending him, but what are, as it were neceſſary upon him, the Reſults of that Temper he has form'd in him.

But that we may even have the experience of this Doctrine or obſerve it in others, we plainly ſee that Habits of Life determine the ſort, and found the moſt affecting Reliſh or Senſe of all the Enjoyments we have; nay, that this Reliſh commonly laſts (not to ſay always) after the proper time is over of purſuing thoſe Acts from whence it was, as *Plutarch* tells us concerning the old Olympick Wreſtlers, who had ſafely come off from ſo many hazards, that they mainly delighted to be Spectators of thoſe ſavage Exerciſes, when years had depriv'd them of the Honour, as they eſteem'd it, of being Parties themſelves, *viz.* of ſpilling their own Blood, or that of others in them. And we may every day ſadly remark in worn out Debauchees among our ſelves, how their Vices ſtick in their decrepid Natures, and what polluted Souls they carry about with them; and if this be ſo as to Vitious Courſes, when People are diſabl'd from acting any more the wicked Inſtance, much more will it hold with regard to the Habits of a Holy Life, where the capacity of the Vertuous Act not only continues, but is ever increas'd with a farther complacency, that muſt likewiſe attend it.

Thus we lay the Foundation of our after State, whether Happineſs or Miſery, from our own Behaviour; Heaven poſſeſſes us according to our Improvements of a Goſpel Vertue, or Hell ſeizes us while we perſiſt in our Evil Courſes, theſe begin here, the one, and the other, how they will increaſe, or enlarge of themſelves in a Spiritual World, (tho' we may pretty well gueſs

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at this part) and what positive degrees may be added to either of them, what Light and Glory, or what inflicted Punishment, we cannot tell farther than Revelation teaches us; but be sure they are both dispens'd, being said to be Recompenses, and eternal too, upon the ground of the use of our Wills, or our voluntary Behaviour, as that has wrought certain Dispositions in us; or to speak the *Pythagorean* Language, ἐκ προκοπῆς, ἣ κατ' ἐπίδοσιν (Hierocl. p. 314.) as by our growth and increase in Holiness, (the Assimilation That founds to all good Spirits, Angels, and God) we prepare our selves to be Partners with them in the freest Communications of that infinite Being, whereon depends all the Happiness of created Natures, as well theirs, as ours.

We are thus to be quickned thro' the Efficacy of the Spirit, and our earnest Diligence, or Strivings with him; a Christian Temper, a Habit of the highest Gospel-Righteousness is thus to be obtain'd, or laid in our Minds. And I think no more can be urg'd to engage us to the attainment thereof, than that 'twill make us as knowing in the best kind, and as happy as we can possibly be, or our Natures will admit of, both here, and hereafter; unless that will more prevail, that the neglect of this, or the contrary Habit from a course of Sin will render us miserable to the same degrees, which is a matter of equal Truth, and a more forcible Argument with most People, tho' it express a great Depravity, and Disingenuity in them. That therefore, by all the most prevailing Means, and Motives that can be offer'd a reasonable Creature, we may arrive at a State of Holiness, even according to the Doctrines of our blessed Saviour, *God of his infinite Mercy grant thro' the Mediation of this blessed Saviour, and in the helps of the eternal Spirit, to whom, three Persons, and one undivided Essence or Nature, be eternally ascrib'd by us, and every Creature in Heaven and Earth, all Honour, Glory, Thanksgiving and Praise.* Amen, Amen.

THE END.

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